

# Passenger Trans-Actions

Michigan Department of Transportation • UPTRAN • Passenger Transportation Division • "We Move People"  
 "Providing Michigan citizens with the best passenger transportation services through quality customer assistance"

## 1998 Ridership Increases

Total ridership for the local bus operating and specialized services programs for October 1997 through September 1998 was 86,474,431. This is a 4% increase from the prior year total ridership. Michigan provides some level of public transportation in all 83 counties.

Seniors and persons with disabilities represented 13% of the total ridership. Specialized Services passengers were 92% seniors and persons with disabilities, while 47% of the passengers for nonurbanized systems and 9% of the passengers for urbanized areas were seniors or persons with disabilities.

A total of 3,208 public transit vehicles provided service in Michigan. Of these, 2,479 or 78% were lift- or ramp-equipped providing service for mobility impaired citizens. The programs used 1,534 vehicles to carry passengers on fixed routes (line-haul), while 1,674 vehicles were used to transport demand response passengers.

## Extended Vehicle Purchasing Reminder

If your transit agency has a replacement vehicle(s) approved in the capital FY98 5309, 5310, or 5311 grant programs, please check the contract(s) you received and make sure all eligible vehicles have been ordered under the Extended Purchasing Plan. You should have received, along with your executed local contract, the proper "Procurement Packet(s)" and letter authorizing you to purchase your vehicles.

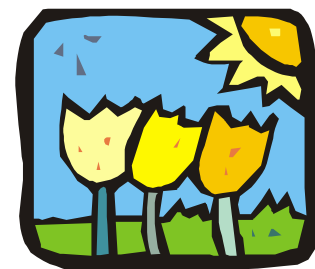
Any vehicles to be ordered under the two cutaway contracts need to be ordered as soon as possible because these contracts will expire on July 1, 1999 [contract #071B7000573: 80" wide Goshen Coach from Transportation Equipment Sales Corporation (TESCO); and contract #071B7000574: 90" wide ElDorado National from Hoekstra Truck Equipment Company, Inc.]. The low floor minivan conversion (National Mobility) contract expires November 17, 1999, and the medium duty diesel bus (ElDorado National) contract expires on April 1, 2000.

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## More Than a Driver

You deal with mad commuters behind the wheel,  
though your peace of mind they seek to steal

You check the oil and map your route  
to help the disabled get out,  
get them where they're going, safe and sound  
to every corner of every town

You listen to those who no one hears,  
secure their seat belts – subdue their fears

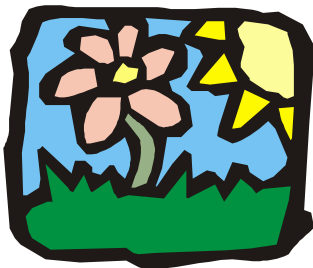
You rise up early and get yourself going  
no matter what snows or winds are blowing,  
so those with no cars can visit their healers  
on sturdy arms and canes, and four-wheelers

Giving your time, your mind, your heart  
So these special folks can be a part  
of a better world – a better life;  
one that cares for everyone's strife  
where just because someone has no ride  
doesn't mean they should lose their pride

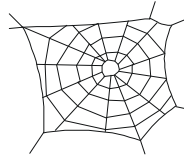
A hand  
a smile  
a ride  
a hello  
you give every day  
more than you know.

By Thomas Smith  
Paratransit Coordinator  
Catholic Community Services  
Union County Office

*Reprinted from "Grass Routes," The Washington  
State Rural Transportation Newsletter.*



## PTD's Web Page



The Passenger Transportation Division's (PTD) web page has been rolled out! Great care has gone into developing pages that are useful and easy to navigate. PTD's calendar of events, staff information, application instructions, laws and regulations, transit agency information, advisory team minutes, and much more is available through the Internet!! The documents will be updated regularly so that you will have up to date information and breaking news. Thanks to Gus Lluberes for spending many hours developing the web page. Take a look at <http://mdot.state.mi.us/uptran/ptd> and let Gus know what you think. His email address is [lluberesg@mdot.state.mi.us](mailto:lluberesg@mdot.state.mi.us) or phone him at 517/373-8820.

## Welcome New PTD Employees

PTD's Technical Assistance and Regulatory Section (TARS) welcomes three new employees: Debi Magley, Mike Wurmlinger, and Sally Partee.

Debi joins TARS as the section secretary. Debi previously worked in the Freight Division of UPTRAN and has 24 years of state government experience.

Mike joins the Regulatory Unit of TARS as a Departmental Analyst and will monitor and track the compliance of motor carriers throughout Michigan. Mike came to MDOT from the Michigan Jobs Commission and has been with the State for eight years.

Sally also joins the Regulatory Unit of TARS as a regulatory affairs assistant in limousine regulatory services. Sally and co-worker Sara Spaulding share the responsibility of credentialing and licensing limousines in Michigan. Sally previously worked for a non-profit association and for the Detroit College of Law as a faculty secretary.

The Transportation Services Section (TSS) welcomes two new employees: Vincent Ranger and Forest Kraus.

Vincent joins TSS's Urban Unit as the project manager for southeast Michigan. He previously worked in the MDOT Planning Bureau for five years and has considerable knowledge in how public policy impacts transportation. Vincent graduated from Wayne State University with a Master of Arts in Public Administration with a concentration in public budgeting and finance.

Forest Kraus joins TSS's Statewide Coordination Unit as a project manager for the intercity bus operating program. His responsibilities include oversight of intercity bus operations as it relates to state subsidized routes and facilities. Forest brings over 20 years of state government experience and has been instrumental in coordinating the intercity bus service in the Upper Peninsula.

## 1999 Small Bus Rodeo - July 28

Mark your calendar for the biggest rootin' tootin' event this summer; ya'all know its gotta be the Small Bus Rodeo. Holiday Inn South in Lansing is the place and July 28, 1999, is the date. The Michigan Public Transit Association is donating prize money for the top three individual drivers: \$200 for first, \$150 for second and \$100 for third (that could make your pockets jingle more'n yur spurs!). The three winners will also get a free trip to Ft. Lauderdale to participate in the National Rodeo next year (this trip doesn't count against your agency's yearly RTAP allocation cause it's paid for by MDOT). That ain't all, the night before the Rodeo, July 27, we'll spend an evening with the Lansing Lugnuts (Lansing's minor league baseball team). Hoekstra Truck and Equipment Company and ElDorado National will be treating ya ta dinner at the ballpark and the game. So come on and get your driver(s) out to the Rodeo for the team and/or individual competitions cuz we're gonna need lotsa' bus drivers to help make the 1999 Small Bus Rodeo a great success. The registration information will be in the mail by the end of May. Contact Linda Williams at [williamsl@mdot.state.mi.us](mailto:williamsl@mdot.state.mi.us) or phone her at 517/241-3221 for more information.



## Around the State

### Managers on the Move!

Ken Jimkoski is the new Director of the Huron Transit Corporation effective April 15. Ken has been a long-time employee of Huron Transit and has managed the maintenance department for several years. Ken assumes responsibility from Dave Babcock who was recently appointed Executive Director of the Greater Lapeer Transportation Authority. Congratulations to Ken and to Dave!



Congratulation to Brian Pouget on becoming the Operations Manager for the Grand Rapids Area Transportation Authority (GRATA). Brian started his new duties April

1, and replaced Peter Varga who has taken the reins as General Manager of GRATA. Brian has spent the last 12 years as Executive Director of the Greater Lapeer Transportation Authority.

### ARCH, Inc. 30 Years Celebration

On April 15, ARCH, Inc., in Sturgis, Mich. celebrated 30 years of business with a luncheon. There were approximately 100 people in attendance representing a wide variety of organizations and businesses. ARCH's Director Jill Moerland and staff thanked the many businesses for their support through the years. Also recognized were many staff and people from the community. Russ Laverty, MDOT, accepted a plaque from the transportation coordinator, Mrs Jean Taylor, for continued support from MDOT for both capital and specialized services funding. PTD and Russ thank ARCH, Inc. and wish them continued success with their many assistance programs to the handicapped.

### Congratulations, Wayne!

Chief Wayne Mattix retired from the City of Dowagiac Fire Department on April 2 after over 34 years of service and 17 years as Fire Chief. In addition, Wayne has served as transportation coordinator for the Dowagiac Dial-A-Ride for the past 10 years and he plans to continue to manage DART on a part-time basis for a while. When asked about his retirement plans, he mentioned golf, his wife Frances' honey-do list, golf, the grandchildren, golf, fishing, golf, golf, and you guessed it, more golf! The PTD staff extends our congratulations to Wayne for a job well-done and our best wishes for a long, enjoyable retirement!

### Congrats to CATA!

Sandy Draggoo, Capital Area Transportation Authority, received the 1998 Athena Award at the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce's annual dinner in February. The Athena Award recognizes outstanding support of professional women. Congratulations, Sandy!

Also, CATA received two ADWHEEL Awards at the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual APTA Conference in October 1998. The awards were for CATA's "Great Escape" poster and CATA Transportation Center's (CTC) print ad, "Make the CATA Connection."



## Dates to Remember

### CTAA Expo '99

May 22-28, 1999, New Orleans, Louisiana

### Transit Vehicle and Equipment Seminar

June 16-18, 1999 (see article pg. 4)

Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center  
Higgins Lake

### CTAA Welfare to Work Region V Conference

July 27, 1999 in Troy

Contact Rose Ann Ward for more  
information, 517/335-2598

### Small Bus Roadeo (see article pg. 3)

July 28, 1999

Holiday Inn South, Lansing

### APTA Annual Meeting

October 10-14, 1999, Orlando, Florida

### 1999 PTD Annual Meeting

October 25-27, 1999

Grand Traverse Resort, Acme

Contact Linda Tuttle for more information  
517/373-7645

## Job Access/ Reverse Commute Program

The applications for the Job Access/Reverse Commute Program grant applications are currently being reviewed by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). PTD submitted an application for 10 individual projects that would provide transportation services to 16 rural counties. The division also reviewed and submitted applications from three small urban areas. The total amount of federal dollars requested for the first year of funding from these applications was \$1,372,848. Due to the number of applications, it has taken FTA longer than expected to evaluate and approve projects. It is expected that an announcement will be made in the near future.

## Transit Vehicle & Equipment Seminar

Mark your calendars for the Transit Vehicle and Equipment Seminar, June 16-18, 1999, at the Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center at Higgins Lake. The seminar will commence with lunch on Wednesday, June 16 followed by the Transit Vehicle and Equipment Show Wednesday afternoon. Workshops, including a Ricon lift maintenance certification class, will be held all day Thursday and Friday morning. Workshop certificates will be distributed Friday morning and the seminar will close with lunch.



Registration packets were mailed the last week of April. If you haven't received a packet, please contact Debi Magley at 517/335-2475.

We look forward to another fantastic Transit Vehicle and Equipment Seminar this year!

## UP Bus Service

Greyhound Lines, Inc. has been awarded a three year contract to provide intercity bus service in the upper peninsula. The routes include: Calumet, Michigan to Milwaukee, Wisconsin; St. Ignace, Michigan to Duluth Minnesota; and Marquette, Michigan to Green Bay, Wisconsin. Greyhound was selected based on its bid proposal and the fact that it illustrated an ability to connect with both downstate Michigan and the national bus system. Contact Forest Kraus at [krausf2@mdot.state.mi.us](mailto:krausf2@mdot.state.mi.us) or phone him at 517/335-2572 for more information.

Passenger Trans-Actions & THE INTERCHANGE are quarterly news bulletins produced by the Michigan Department of Transportation, Passenger Transportation Division for the public transit providers in Michigan. Suggestions or comments may be sent to Jill Adams, MDOT/UPTRAN, Passenger Transportation Division, P. O. Box 30050, Lansing, Michigan 48909; (517) 373-2051; email [adamsji@mdot.state.mi.us](mailto:adamsji@mdot.state.mi.us). Alternative formats such as large print, braille, or audio-tape are available upon request by calling Rose Ann Ward (517) 335-2598. Number of copies: 500; total cost: \$101.85; cost per copy: \$0.20.

# Michigan Transit Center for Excellence (MTCE)

In 1997, MDOT established the MTCE in conjunction with six Michigan universities. The MTCE provides the transit community with a wide range of technical expertise including, but not limited to: encourage and evaluate new public transit technology; develop and improve public transit training programs; improve efficiency and effectiveness of public transit services; increase use of public transit; and improve safety for the public. Listed below are updates on three MTCE projects.

## Bus Body Structural Integrity Project Update

Michigan Technological University's Keweenaw Research Center completed testing on two medium duty Champion buses and presented a final report to PTD in February. Some of the report's recommendations have already been addressed by the Vehicle and Equipment Advisory Team and are contained in the new vehicle specifications:

- The Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) 220 Rollover Test will continue to be required in the State of Michigan bus specifications, and our specification now requires the successful bidder to submit the test results on the bus that is being offered in the bid.
- A copy of the Altoona Bus Test Report is now required to be submitted by the successful bidder and will be reviewed for weaknesses in the structure and design.
- The use of wood as a substrate material to the exterior skin is now prohibited.
- All structural members are now coated with corrosion resistant primer and paint coating. All structural members (box type tubing) used from the window line down, including the floor structure, will also have the interior of the tube coated with corrosion resistant material.
- Window openings are now specified with a maximum opening size of 1/8" (1/16" around the window).
- The wording "or equal mechanical properties" when referring to the metal covering and structure does require a manufacturer to meet the minimum properties specified.
- As suggested, we removed the additional requirement for the body structure to be able to support the entire weight of a fully loaded vehicle on its top or side if overturned. All requirements for structure are to comply with the FMVSS 220 Rollover Test.

Contact Jerome Jonson at (517) 335-2568 or email [jonsonj@mdot.state.mi.us](mailto:jonsonj@mdot.state.mi.us) for more information.

## Transit Strategic Plan Project

The University of Michigan (UM) will conduct the transit strategic plan update. An oversight team consisting of PTD staff, specialized services providers, transit agencies, and a representative from the Office of Services to the Aging will provide input into the study and oversee activities. In late April, the team discussed issues that would be included as part of the plan, the schedule for the study, and the focus groups that will be held this summer. The revised strategic plan is expected to be completed in June 2000. Anyone wanting to participate on a focus group should contact Linda Tuttle at (517) 373-7645 or by e-mail at [tuttlel@mdot.state.mi.us](mailto:tuttlel@mdot.state.mi.us).

## Violent Crime Study Update

The violent crime study was completed in April by the University of Michigan. We want to thank the members of the project oversight team and all the public transit agencies who participated in the agency, driver, and passenger surveys.

Some findings from the report include: quality of life crimes (such as drunkenness, vandalism, disorderly conduct and verbal abuse) appeared as the most prevalent type of crime in all study components (literature review and all surveys); while agencies believe that their drivers are well equipped to handle crimes and emergencies, drivers themselves are not convinced that this is the case; and the literature review documents a perceptual mismatch between the public's perception of transit safety and the actual level of transit safety.

The report lists policy recommendations for the transit agencies in the following areas: crime data, driver training, patrol and security, technology, design issues, service improvements, and information campaigns. The report also lists recommendations for MDOT and the State Legislature.

A copy of the Executive Summary can be obtained by contacting Jill Adams at 517/373-2051 or email [adamsji@mdot.state.mi.us](mailto:adamsji@mdot.state.mi.us).



The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee  
Center for Transportation Education and Development  
Schedule of Courses

Train-the-Trainer: Building Platform Skills . . . . . June 10-11, 1999  
Managing and Planning Rural and Small Urban Systems . . . . . July 12-15, 1999  
Transit Management for Fixed-Route Service Workshop . . . . . August 16-20, 1999  
Coordination Strategies: Models of Excellence . . . . . October 4-5, 1999

For more information, please contact Wyatt Osato, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, at (414) 227-3332.

## **Advisory Team Updates**

**Specialized Services Coordination** – The Specialized Services Coordination Team held a special meeting on March 12, 1999, to discuss promotion of volunteer driver programs. Loretta Adams-Ashby from Yates Dial-A-Ride, explained how their volunteer driver program operates. Guest speakers from the Office of Services to the Aging and the Insurance Bureau also attended. The team plans to evaluate the Specialized Services Operating Assistance Program grant application to determine if there are changes that could be incorporated into the document to further promote the use of volunteer drivers. Proposed language changes will be forwarded to management for consideration.

**Transit Vehicle & Equipment Advisory Team (VEAT)** – The next meeting of the VEAT is scheduled for Wednesday, May 12, 1999, at 10 a.m. at the Transportation Service Center in East Lansing. The committee will review the minivan conversion specification. The previous meeting included a review of the existing cutaway specification in preparation for bid this May. Future plans include the development of both a 10 and 12 year bus specification.

***Michigan Department of Transportation***

James R. DeSana, Director

***Urban and Public Transportation***

Philip F. Kazmierski, Deputy Director

***Passenger Transportation Division***

Kip Grimes, Administrator

***Transportation Commission***

Barton W. LaBelle, Chairman

Jack L. Gingrass, Vice Chairman

Lowell B. Jackson

John W. Garside

Betty Jean Awrey

Ted B. Wahby

## **Performance Measures Study Update**

PTD in conjunction with Wayne State University (WSU) is conducting a research project entitled “A PTMS Based Procedure to Assess Performance of Transit Agencies in the State of Michigan.” The project oversight team consists of personnel from several transit agencies, a planning commission, university representatives, and MDOT personnel.

WSU has completed a literature review which focused on procedures for identifying peer groups and their attributes and characteristics, as well as on the statistical techniques and tools used in past studies to evaluate a specific agency with respect to its peer group. In March, WSU presented a draft report to the oversight team on the findings from this literature review.

WSU is now concentrating on developing proposed procedures based on the identification of different types of peer groups, comparing the performance of the subject agency with that of its peer group and identifying the “outliers” in the distribution, following a statistically valid approach. Project completion date is March 2000.

If you would like additional information on this project, contact Jill Adams at 517/373-2051 or email [adamsji@mdot.state.mi.us](mailto:adamsji@mdot.state.mi.us).

## Rail Fixed Guideway Systems: Oversight Agency

Governor John Engler, in a letter dated April 27, 1999 to Gordon J. Linton, Administrator, Federal Transit Administration (FTA), designated the Michigan Department of Consumer & Industry Services as the State's Oversight Agency to oversee the safety and security of the Detroit People Mover. The designation of the Oversight Agency was required by the FTA in the final rule (49CFR Part 659) titled, "Rail Fixed Guideway Systems: State Oversight." The rule required states to have a designated Oversight Agency for fixed guideway rail systems. The Governor has requested FTA to release the Federal Section 5307 funds they have been withholding from the transit agencies in urbanized areas.

The Department of Consumer & Industry Services (CIS) will proceed immediately to assemble a team made up of experts in the field of safety, security, and transit operations to perform an on-site review of the People Mover facilities, equipment, operations, security systems, and existing safety and security programs and plans. As required by the Final Rule of December 27, 1995, CIS is required to develop a System Safety Program Standard and the Detroit Transportation Corporation, the operator of the People Mover, is required to prepare a System Safety Program and System Safety Program Plan for approval by FTA. FTA also requires a Security Plan as well as annual reports and a three year Safety and Security Review.

## Heart O'Gold Awards

On Tuesday, March 23, Driver Don Nessen, Charlevoix County Public Transportation, was southbound on US-31 when two deer ran out in front of a van. The van hit both deer and Don stopped to offer assistance. The family was on their way to the airport and were concerned they would miss their plane, since their car was now disabled.



Don helped the family board the bus, made arrangements for their van, and called dispatcher Frank Rutherford who called the airline supervisor to delay the plane. Frank covered Don's bus routes and the airlines had a luggage carrier waiting for the family. The scheduled departure was delayed only a couple of minutes and the family was overwhelmed by the help they received.



## Federal Grant Applications

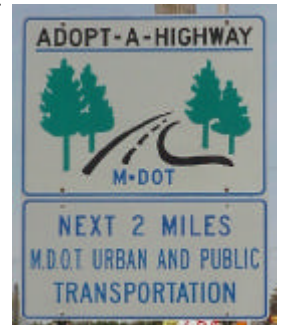
PTD has completed the following grant applications to the Federal Transit Administration:

Section 5311 application for a total of \$5,928,430. This includes \$4,777,480 for operating assistance for 67 nonurbanized agencies; \$142,380 for the Rural Assistance Program (RTAP); and \$1,008,570 for Intercity Bus Transportation.

Section 5307 application for \$671,716 to purchase replacement buses for Bay Metropolitan Transportation Authority, Blue Water Area Transportation Commission in Port Huron, and the City of Kalamazoo.

## Adoption Notice

As a member of MDOT's Adopt-a-Highway program, UPTRAN is pleased to announce that they are the proud adoptive parents of a highway. The new addition to the family is 2.1 miles long and weighs several thousand pounds. Her name is Grand River Highway (Business I-96) in Lansing. Quite frankly, she was a mess when we got her! In late April, 18 UPTRAN employees spent some quality time with her - removing 57 bags of trash from her shoulders and tidying up her peripherals - and she's looking as good as new. If your transit agency is interested in adopting a highway in your area, please contact MDOT's Scott Wheeler at 517/322-3388.



# Marketing Minute

## MARKETING COLUMN

Taking advantage of national marketing campaigns to help promote your transit agency is a wise way to stretch your marketing dollars and get some really great (free!) marketing ideas. The two biggies in our industry are National Transportation Week and Try Transit Week

**National Transportation Week** is May 16-22, 1999, and is sponsored by the United States Department of Transportation. National Transportation Week provides an opportunity for the transportation community to join together to reach the general public both to help them as users of the system, as well as to bring greater awareness of the importance of transportation. All components of transportation are included in this campaign from highways to aviation to marine to mass transit. You can check out public relations materials, technology sharing information, educational packages, and special events held by others around the country on the official National Transportation Week web site located at <http://www.ntweek.org/>.

**Try Transit Week** is September 12-18, 1999, and is an annual campaign sponsored by the American Public Transit Association (APTA) and co-sponsored by groups and organizations that support greater use of public transit and ridesharing. Try Transit Week is used to call attention to the many benefits a community experiences when more people ride together to their work, shopping, and school destinations -- whether on a bus or train or in a carpool or vanpool.

The Try Transit Week web site located at <http://www.apta.com/services/ttw.htm> has loads of great information and suggestions including daily themes, a sample resolution, a long list of interesting transit facts and benefits of transit, and several examples of what other transit agencies have done to celebrate Try Transit Week. The site suggests that public transit providers and public transit supporters should use Try Transit Week to:

- Promote the community benefits of effective transit service. Build awareness of how public transit better the quality of life -- vital transportation service, congestion relief, cleaner air, economic development, a more livable community. This awareness of transit's vital role can translate into public and political support.

- Highlight transit's vital role in providing access to jobs in your community. Transit, which has long provided residents with access to their workplaces, is in the forefront of the welfare reform movement. Generally acknowledged to be the "to" in the welfare-to-work equation, transit is moving quickly to carry people from the welfare rolls to the workplace. This calls for unique approaches and partnerships in your communities.
- Attract non-riders through a variety of promotional efforts. Reduced fare days, promotional programs backed by co-sponsors, special events, and other methods can attract new customers to transit for one day, and can lead them to become regular riders.
- Organize and engage supporters, particularly through a local transit coalition. Reach out and involve local groups and individuals who have a vital interest in transit's local, state, and federal legislative goals.
- Honor both transit employees and regular customers. Try Transit Week began as one day set aside during National Transportation Week to honor transit employees. This Appreciation Day observance continues as a way to honor transit employees for the dedicated service they provide to their community. It is also used to thank transit riders for their regular use of public transit, which makes their community a better place to live.

These two national campaigns offer great marketing opportunities. So pick one (or both) and spread the word about what a great transit system you have!

The Marketing Subteam  
of the Management Advisory Team  
sponsors this Marketing Column  
in the Passenger Trans-Actions  
in the hopes of "sharing the good stuff."  
Please forward items of interest  
to Linda Tuttle, fax (517) 373-7997  
or email: [tuttle@mdot.state.mi.us](mailto:tuttle@mdot.state.mi.us).





## **ADA UPDATE**

### **EEOC Issues Reasonable Accommodation Guidance**

On March 1, 1999, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission issued additional guidance on reasonable accommodations entitled, *“Reasonable Accommodation and Undue Hardship Under the Americans With Disabilities Act.”* The guidance includes EEOC’s analysis of requirements concerning medical documentation to support accommodation requests, acceptable response time to requests, equal access to information at work, job reassignment, telecommuting, past performance problems, and undue hardship.

If you would like a copy of the EEOC guidance, contact Rose Ann Ward at (517) 335-2598 or e-mail [wardr@mdot.state.mi.us](mailto:wardr@mdot.state.mi.us).

### **Over-the-Road Bus Accessibility Program Grants**

In a Federal Register dated February 8, 1999, the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Transit Administration announced the availability of TEA-21 funds for private carriers of over-the-road buses to finance the capital and training costs of complying with the final ADA over-the-road bus regulations issued last year. Grantees will be selected on a competitive basis. The deadline for submitting grant applications to the FTA regional offices has been extended from April 16, 1999 to May 14, 1999.

## **“Disability Voice” Plans Townhall Meetings**

“Disability Voice” is a consolidated community planning project made up of seven state organizations that have consolidated their efforts into a single project of obtaining public input on disability issues through town hall meetings. These seven state organizations are:

Michigan Statewide Independent Living Council,  
Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns,  
TECH 2000,  
Michigan Rehabilitation Services,  
Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council,  
Michigan Department of Transportation, and  
Michigan Rehabilitation Advisory Council.

Townhall meetings were held in Rochester Hills on April 15 and Westland on April 22. The dates and locations for the remaining 1999 town hall meetings are as follows:

May 21	Upper Peninsula (audio conference linking sites in Sault Ste. Marie, Marquette, Escanaba and Houghton)
June 4	Muskegon
June 8	Detroit

If you would like additional information on upcoming town hall meetings, contact Rose Ann Ward at (517) 335-2598 or e-mail [wardr@mdot.state.mi.us](mailto:wardr@mdot.state.mi.us).

## **SEMCOG Hosts Elderly Mobility and Safety Forum**

Approximately 150 people attended the Elderly Mobility and Safety Forum hosted by the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) on April 12, 1999, in Troy. Staff from the Office of the Secretary of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Federal Highway Administration, and Federal Transit Administration spoke about the national agenda for meeting the transportation needs of an aging society.

A panel consisting of Greg Cook, Ann Arbor Transportation Authority; Claryce Gibbons-Allen, Detroit Department of Transportation; Robert KinKead, consumer representative; Ron Ristau, Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation; and Rose Ann Ward, MDOT, led a group discussion in a workshop entitled "Enhancing Alternative Transportation Options." At the workshop, participants identified transportation issues impacting the mobility of our state's elderly, as well as the barriers and solutions for addressing the issues. Other workshops explored new highway design initiatives and addressed the enhancement of safe mobility for the elderly.

The Elderly and Mobility Safety Task Force, a statewide interdisciplinary task force, has developed an *"Elderly Mobility and Safety - the Michigan Approach, Draft Plan of Action."* The draft plan outlines the recommendations for preserving the mobility and enhancing the safety of the elderly population. Focus group research sessions were conducted in April 1999 with elderly citizens and their care givers, as well as with professionals involved in elderly mobility and safety issues. The input gathered from these sessions will be used to validate and, if necessary, revise the draft recommendations.

For additional information regarding the activities of the task force and the draft plan of action, call SEMCOG at (313) 961-4266 or e-mail at <http://www.semco.org>.

## **Ride, Drive or Walk: Successes in Senior Transportation**

Providers of specialized, private, community, or public transportation services are invited to attend a one-day conference to learn more about the innovators in communities nationwide who are working to extend the safe driving careers of older individuals and to assure their long-term mobility.

The conference will be held at the Southfield Centre for the Arts, Southfield, Michigan on June 10, 1999, and is sponsored by the Independence for Life with funding from the Michigan Offices of Services to the Aging. To receive additional information or registration materials, call Independence for Life (800) 344-2535. The registration deadline is May 24, 1999, and no registrations will be accepted by phone or at the door.

## **Upcoming Conferences**

**Solutions for the New Millennium** is the theme of Project ACTION's two technical assistance conferences scheduled in Portland, Oregon, June 3-5, 1999, and Dallas, Texas, June 27-29, 1999. Targeted participants include transportation providers and disability advocates. For more information, call Project ACTION at 1-800-659-6428 or visit their web site at [www.projectaction.org](http://www.projectaction.org).

The focus of THE INTERCHANGE is to establish a forum for information sharing among groups and provide information regarding programs and activities that affect seniors and persons with disabilities. If you wish to share information with others through this bulletin, or would like to see specific issues addressed, please write or call Rose Ann Ward, UPTRAN, P.O. Box 30050, Lansing, MI 48909; (517) 335-2598; email at [wardr@mdot.state.mi.us](mailto:wardr@mdot.state.mi.us).